



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**UNDERSTANDING THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF  
UZBEKISTAN THROUGH SOCIAL MOVEMENT  
THEORY, AND ANALYZING AND EVALUATING ITS  
POTENTIAL THREAT TO KAZAKHSTAN**

by

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December 2014

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THROUGH SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY, AND ANALYZING AND  
EVALUATING ITS POTENTIAL THREAT TO KAZAKHSTAN**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) is a group of militants from Uzbekistan established by Uzbek youth who were against the pro-communist government. It is tightly connected to the Taliban and was involved in drug trafficking in Afghanistan. After an unsuccessful attempt to revolt against the government of Uzbekistan, the party was banned, and its members fled the country. Islamic militants tried to change the economically and politically weakened governments into an Islamic Caliphate. After going through training camps, these militants were formalized into small groups that were transported through Iran to Turkey and other Central Asian countries in order to create different kinds of radical groups. Their radical ideology spread, such as killing infidels and sacrificing themselves for jihad. Decentralization of the IMU has made it difficult to track. Through social movement theory (SMT), this thesis examines how the IMU is a potential threat to Central Asian states, especially Kazakhstan, by using elements of SMT.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

FATA	Federally Administrated Tribal Areas
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IRP	Islamic Renaissance Party
ISI	Pakistan Inter-Service Intelligence
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
RMT	Resource Mobilization Theory
SMO	Social Movement Organizations
SMT	Social Movement Theory
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. BACKGROUND**

The Islamic movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) has been an active terrorist organization in Central Asia since its formation in 1998. Before that time, it was not organized well, and consisted of different unnamed groups. Its original goals were to overthrow the pro-communist government of Uzbekistan, especially President Karimov, establishing an Islamic Caliphate in Uzbekistan (Fergana Valley) and other Central Asian countries.<sup>1</sup> After the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan that followed the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington, the IMU shifted to the Afghan-Pakistan border. During this invasion, its leaders, Juma Namangani and Tahir Yuldashev, were killed in November 2001 and in August 2009, respectively, and the group was forced to change its location and deviate from its original goal of attacking the Uzbek government. Despite those changes, the IMU continues to operate in and around South Waziristan (Pakistan) against Coalition Forces in different locations of this region.<sup>2</sup> Today, the IMU takes the form of a decentralized network that has become stronger and less vulnerable, making it hard to target. Even though it was displaced from its original location, the IMU continues to gain strength. There is a risk in the future that the IMU will thrive and pose a danger to Kazakhstan.

## **B. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this thesis is to use social movement theory to examine and assess the IMU through multiple variables, such as political opportunity, mobilizing structure, cultural framing, and its potential threat to Kazakhstan. The IMU is growing as a threat in several ways; it is a radicalized terrorist group that has close relations with other terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaida and the Taliban. Those terrorist groups also have decentralized

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<sup>1</sup> Rashid Rashid Ahmed, "Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia" (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 143.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Stein, "The Goals of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Its Impact on Central Asia and the United States," Foreign Military Studies Office, <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/IMU-Goals.pdf>.

structures now. At the same time, the IMU has been deeply engaged in criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, money laundering, and hostage taking, to sustain its structure.

The scope of this thesis will include an examination of the political and economic activities that caused instability in Central Asia and gave rise to the IMU. Since the IMU was established by Uzbekistan's youth, specific socio-economic and political conditions in Uzbekistan, along with its history, will be major subjects of examination. Other bordering countries will also be considered.

### C. METHODOLOGY

Assessment and evaluation of those terrorist organizations through social movement theory will allow analyzing the extent of threat the IMU poses to Kazakhstan. Analyzing the actions the IMU conducted in several Central Asian countries and considering the current situation where it operates show that it is gaining a growing capability to conduct terrorist acts. This thesis will help to determine the potential current threat of the IMU in Central Asia and how the IMU in the future may affect Kazakhstan. It is worthwhile to assess the IMU because it has a wide network and many ties with other terrorist organizations, such as Al-Qaida and the Taliban. Terrorist organizations, such as Al-Qaida and the Taliban, provide and help the IMU with money, recruitment, and safe havens. This evidence can be traced. The Social Movement Theory (SMT) helps in analyzing the IMU through variables such as *political opportunities*, *mobilizing structures*, and *cultural framing*. We will discuss each of these variables later.

The variables of social movement theory will be applied to examine a case study in which SMT helps analyze the potential threat of a social movement. The case of the IMU insurgency from the 1980s to present day was chosen because it offered examples of insurgency that developed from a social movement and where government successfully targeted the social movement. However, later on the social movement gained strength and became a terrorist group. Finally, this thesis concludes with suggested policy implementations.

#### **D. THESIS ORGANIZATION**

The IMU still is able to conduct terrorist acts in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. As recent attacks show, it has gained strength and is able to conduct wide-spectrum terrorist acts. Using insights from social movement theory, can we determine whether the IMU will pose a significant threat to Kazakhstan in the future?

Chapter I provides the introduction and defines the research that will be performed in this thesis. It starts with a short background of the IMU, identifies the purpose and scope of the thesis, and describes the methodology and hypothesis. Chapter II presents the extended context of the literature review. It gives full conceptions of the emergence of the radical Islam in Central Asia, SMT, and analysis of the geographical importance of the Central Asia. Chapter III delivers the IMU analysis through SMT using political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes. This chapter shows how the IMU has been evolving since its establishment, its strengths and weaknesses, and the terrorist acts it has committed. Finally, Chapter IV concludes with a research summary, and suggests future research and policy implementations with the researcher's prognosis.

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## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. THE EMERGENCE OF RADICAL ISLAM IN CENTRAL ASIA

In order to have a broad understanding about the emergence of radical Islam in Central Asia, it is best to examine the roots of its emergence. Many empires have risen and fallen in the southern part of the Central Asia (specifically, Samarkand and Bukhara, present-day Uzbekistan). The Mongols conquered the entire region. Islam was brought to the Central Asian region by Arab crusaders approximately 1,400 years ago.<sup>3</sup> The Arab conquest of the Middle East was much easier than that of Central Asia, where invaders met strong resistance and unwillingness to accept Islam as a religion. When the Arab leader Kuteiba ibn Muslim tried to convert the Central Asian people to Islam, they ignored Islam and were viewed as “infidels” by the Arabs.<sup>4</sup> It was not until the ninth century that Islam established itself as a dominant religion in the Samarkand and Bukhara regions of Uzbekistan, whereas in regions such as Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Islam had no impact at that time, because most of the people in that area had a nomadic lifestyle. This fact is essential to underline, because radicalization is based on the religious belief of these people. Some tribes and khanates were forced to accept Islam (in present-day Uzbekistan region), whereas others accepted it willingly. Some Central Asian tribes had such beliefs as Zoroastrianism, Shamanism, and Tengriism (worshipping different kinds of symbols). The latter is still prevalent in some Central Asian countries. Arabs struggled to introduce Islam to these south Central Asian populations.

The Arabs used several systems of conversion to Islam, especially a reward system. They offered two *dirmhams* to everyone who attended Friday prayer in the great mosque of Bukhara.<sup>5</sup> Islam was also disseminated by Muslim merchants and missionaries who exposed the population to the religion along the Silk Road.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Emmanuel Karagiannis, *Political Islam in Central Asia: The Challenge of Hizb Ut-Tahrir* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Muzafarpur Virkan, “History of the Spread of Islam in Central Asia,” Islam News, <http://www.islamnews.tj/history.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Karagiannis, *Political Islam in Central Asia*.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

The mixture of Islam with Persian culture made cities like Bukhara and Samarkand the Islamic center of the region, and later on this culture spread to Turkic people in the region. In other words, dissemination of Islam in Central Asia started from the South and gradually spread to the North. Local people used their own main languages, but they also spoke Farsi and Arabic (the language of the Koran).<sup>7</sup> Nomadic tribes were more difficult targets for Islam, so these tribes adopted a superficial concept of that religion. Despite the fact people in some places were forced to embrace Islam, it was not radicalized Islam.

The Mongol Empire, which embraced all of Central Asia and part of Europe, united all tribes into one and used Islam as a political weapon to enlarge its territory. In fact, many Mongols embraced Islam as their religion, as well. However, no matter how fully Islam was embraced by Central Asians, they never had a government based on theocracy.

When Central Asia fell under the influence of the Russian Empire, it did not eliminate Islam. In general, the Russian Tsar did not interfere in the religious life of the Muslim population. However, he wanted to change the Central Asian governance system to be similar to the Russian system.<sup>8</sup> Later on, Russia conducted a *Russifikatsya* policy to change thinking in education and polity.

Closeness between Central Asians and Russians was based primarily on their geographical proximity. This is an important point, because it influenced their religious life and secularity. The closer a country was geographically to the Russian Empire, the more secular the people became. Despite that, Islam has continued to blossom.<sup>9</sup>

Notwithstanding the claim that socialism was the main way to move forward, religion played an important role for Central Asian Muslims. After the Revolution of 1917, the Bolsheviks came to power and started enforcing their political ideology—communism. They did not tolerate any religion, including Islam, and tried to eliminate all

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<sup>7</sup> Ronald Z. Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, *Islam and Central Asia: An Enduring Legacy or an Evolving Threat?* (Washington, DC: Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 2000), 7.

<sup>8</sup> Mehrdad Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 75.

<sup>9</sup> Sagdeev and Eisenhower, *Islam and Central Asia*, 8.

forms of religion, which became the beginning of the suppression of the people who wanted to keep their religious life. Bolsheviks subjugated Islamic clergymen and destroyed many mosques and religious schools.<sup>10</sup> For the Bolsheviks, religion was “the opium of the masses” and, by definition, the enemy of the population. Pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism were the main concern of Bolsheviks because these both might merge and create an obstacle to Bolshevik success. Bolsheviks conducted their anti-religious campaigns for atheism in Muslim regions. The Communist Party controlled even the nominations of religious leaders.

Under these circumstances, part of the clergy joined the Basmachi movement against Soviet suppression and used guerilla tactics. Basmachi fought against infidels who were Bolsheviks in an attempt to overthrow them. This was the first time the Central Asian Muslims declared Jihad.<sup>11</sup> It was not radicalized Islam, but a reaction to Bolsheviks trying to terminate them. In fact, Enver Pasha, the former Ottoman War Minister and Commander-in-Chief during the First World War, joined the Central Asian Muslim Basmachi rebellion in 1921, though the rebellion was defeated later by communists in 1928.<sup>12</sup> Yet some sources say that this rebellion lasted until 1938 in some parts of Central Asia. Lenin, who came into power as a result of The Revolution of 1917, declared:

Muslims of Russia, Tatars of Crimea and Volga, Kirgiz (Bolsheviks called Kazakhs Kirgiz to have a clear distinction between Kazak and Kazakh) and Sarts of Siberia and Turkistan, Turks and Tatars of Transcaucasia, Chechen and Mountain Peoples of Caucasus, and all you whose mosques and prayer houses have been destroyed, whose beliefs and customs have been trampled upon by the Tsars and oppressors of Russia: Your beliefs and usages, your national and cultural institutions are forever free and inviolate. Know that your rights, like those of all people of Russia, are under the mighty protection of the Revolution and its organs, the Soviet of Workers, Soldiers, and Peasants.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Sagdeev and Eisenhower, *Islam and Central Asia*, 9.

<sup>11</sup> Yusupov Timur, “Basmachi - Mujahideen of the Civil War,” Ansar, <http://www.ansar.ru/history/2011/03/06/12366>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Karagiannis, *Political Islam in Central Asia*, 8.

However, his declaration was not authentic. The Bolsheviks continued to enforce their policy. In the end, five of the Soviet Socialist Republics (SSR) were created: The SSR of Uzbekistan was formed in 1924, the SSR of Turkmenistan in 1925, the SSR of Tajikistan in 1929, and the SSR of Kirgiza and Kazakhstan (the Soviets called Kazakhs *Kirgiz-Kaisak* to differentiate between Russian Kazak and Central Asian Kazakh) in 1936.<sup>14</sup> In addition, Moscow forced Central Asian Muslims to change from Arabic script to Latin, and in 1940, to change to Cyrillic.<sup>15</sup> Turkey also followed that policy. In 1927, it declared that sharia courts were abolished in Central Asian republics. Religious activities such as fasting and circumcision also were declared unhealthy by the Soviets.

For the Soviet Union, World War II began in 1941, followed by an unexpected Nazi invasion. Nazis conducted a propaganda campaign by calling on Central Asian Muslims to join them and fight against atheist Bolsheviks. As a result, Stalin softened his oppression of Muslims. In 1943, Stalin established the Spiritual Board of Central Asian Muslims in Uzbekistan. It functioned as the official, Soviet-approved governing agency.<sup>16</sup> Those agencies were established in the Caucasus and in Siberia also, because other Muslim populations lived there. During Khrushchev's time, Islam was an important tool for the Soviet government because it was used as a connection to other Muslims worlds; it made it easier for Soviet Union leaders to succeed politically with Arab countries. During this time, Islamic radicalization began, and underground madrasahs began reviving Islam. Underground Islamic organizations infiltrated social organizations and political parties.<sup>17</sup> The pressure from authorities on religions decreased under Gorbachev when he enforced *perestroika* and *glasnost* policies, and such policies allowed the rebuilding of the first wave of mosques. Radical Islam actively participated in political activity, especially in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, where it played a critical role in, and became one of the factors of, destabilization.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> "All Stages of Kazakh History," YouTube video, 34:56, posted by Mordvin Mordvinov, March 16, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94p-hpoZ9NU>.

<sup>16</sup> Karagiannis, *Political Islam in Central Asia*.

<sup>17</sup> "Islam and Authority in Post-Soviet Central Asia," <http://www.stanradar.com/news/full/3575-islam-i-vlast-v-postsovetskoj-tsentralnoj-azii.html>.



During *perestroika*, all Islamic organizations became a kind of democratic power against communism. Later, however, those organizations started to fight against political opponents. Organizations were composed of religious extremists and fundamentalists. For example, one of the causes of civil war in Tajikistan was religious factions. All political spaces were filled by international Islamic organizations, which were influenced by Wahhabis and fundamentalism. In post-Soviet time, each country had its own different direction regarding Islam.<sup>18</sup> In Tajikistan, activation of an Islamic organization resulted in civil war. In Uzbekistan, the same activation ended up in violent suppression by the government, and most of the spiritual leaders ran away to neighboring countries. In other Central Asian countries, those kinds of organizational activities were banned.

After the collapse of the USSR, all of the Central Asian republics, except Kazakhstan, suffered critical socioeconomic conditions. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan suffered most in the economic sphere, because all subsidies were coming from Moscow.<sup>19</sup> However, all Central Asian societies had weak liberal values in freedom of speech and freedom to vote (especially for religious people). The government was not able to control a market economy and its own identity. Rapid radicalization started. Undereducated youth attended mosques and underground religious organizations where they often became victims of manipulation by spiritual Wahhabis, Salafists, and other radical leaders.<sup>20</sup> They were taught the government was an enemy and anyone who did not support Islam was already perverted. These youths gradually became the participants of the active life of the Central Asian republics, as there were no highly-qualified religious leaders who could teach them about genuine Islam.

The major bodies of knowledge and theory that will inform this thesis are social movement theory and radical movements in Central Asia. Initially, the IMU had a religious character, and therefore, it is important to recall and consider different interpretations and conceptions of Islam, both the genuine and the radicalized one.

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<sup>18</sup> "Islam and Authority in Post-Soviet Central Asia," Stan Radar, <http://www.stanradar.com/news/full/3575-islam-i-vlast-v-postsovetsoj-tsentralnoj-azii.html>.

<sup>19</sup> "Who Has a Better Life after the Soviet Union Collapsed?" NV Online, <http://www.nv-online.info/by/239/printed/40291/>.

<sup>20</sup> "Islam and Authority in Post-Soviet Central Asia."

Ahmed Rashid describes the birth of militant Islam, its roots, expansion, and the meaning of Jihad.<sup>21</sup> Militancy was not essential Jihad. Unlike before, today radical Islamist terrorist groups such as the Taliban and Al Qaida ignore the greater concept of jihad advocated by the prophet. The author especially explains that religious repression, depressed economic conditions, political corruption, and the Soviet Union's collapse created an appealing platform for militant Islamic fundamentalism.

Sagdiyev and Eisenhower illustrate how Islam has survived after all the suppression under Soviet rule.<sup>22</sup> The authors point out that the culture of moderate and tolerant Islam, which developed in Central Asia throughout its history along with the Russian and Soviet educational system, could hardly accept the extremes of Islamic revolution. Even relations between the Soviet Union and Iran were good.<sup>23</sup> They point out how lack of education concerning pure Islam could be one of the many factors that formed militant Islam. All arguments go to the roots, where Islamic extremism comes from Saudi Arabian Wahhabis, who have a radical interpretation of Islam. The key factors were economic crises in those regions that helped fuel Islamic radicals. The authors' final comment is that without a greater international—in particular, U.S. commitment—to try to end the Afghan civil war, the Central Asian region will become more divergent and radicalized.<sup>24</sup>

Hooman Peimani explains how extremist groups in the central Asian countries arose because of rampant poverty, a low standard of living, widespread corruption, and extensive human rights abuses lead to extremist ideologies.<sup>25</sup> However, it is not the only explanation. Burghart and Sabonis-Helf express their viewpoint concerning the emergence and growth of radicalism in the post-communist era. A majority of Central Asian Muslims do not support radical Islam; however, the increasing phenomenon of radicalization is a foreign influence, paralleled by corruption, oppression, and economic

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<sup>21</sup> Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*.

<sup>22</sup> Sagdeev and Eisenhower, *Islam and Central Asia*, 8.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Hooman Peimani, *Conflict and Security in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009), 351.

deterioration.<sup>26</sup> In the face of ongoing wars against global terrorism, Central Asian republics offer various degrees of assistance to the United States. As in Oliver Roy's book, Burghart and Sabonis-Helf agree that the Soviet-Afghan war made its contribution to creating more radicals, where Central Asian Muslims encountered another type of the more desperate form of Islam.<sup>27</sup> In addition, Gorbachev's reforms led to religious thriving in which many Central Asian Muslims were allowed make a pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. Reforms allowed foreign Islamic governments to fund building mosques. In Kazakhstan, the population was less religious and less radically Islamized than in either Uzbekistan or Tajikistan; however, there were some arrests related to distribution of Hisbut Tahir's literature.

Over time, Islam has changed and has been used by people as an instrument to reach their political goals. Misinterpretation of Islam has created many radical branches. Suppression and banning of Islam only made it stronger, and fueled the emergence of radical Islam. As was discussed previously, key factors such as nomadic culture and Soviet ideology influenced the religious life of Central Asian countries and Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan has taken the terrorist threat seriously. In December 2012, President Nazarbayev said, "the secular nature of Kazakhstan is a crucial prerequisite for the nation's further progress."<sup>28</sup> The security threats in Kazakhstan are tied to regional developments. If Kazakhstan's neighbors in Central Asia—including Xinjiang in China and the Ural region in Russia—remain stable, Kazakhstan will be able to resist the increasingly complex and dangerous radical Islamists in Eurasia, which will likely arise after the U.S. war in Afghanistan and the Syrian Civil War.

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<sup>26</sup> Dan Burghart and Theresa Sabonis-Helf, "In the Tracks of Tamerlane: Central Asia's Path to the Twenty-first Century," *European Security* 11, no. 3 (2002): 143.

<sup>27</sup> Burghart and Sabonis-Helf, "In the Tracks of Tamerlane: Central Asia's Path to the Twenty-first Century," 1–19.

<sup>28</sup> Jacob Zenn, "Kazakhstan's Counter-Terrorism Strategies for the Post-2013 Security Environment," <http://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/12806-kazakhstan%E2%80%99s-counter-terrorism-strategies-for-the-post-2013-security-environment.html>.

## B. SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY

SMT appears between structuralist and rational choice theories.<sup>29</sup> Those schools have different units of analysis. Structural theorists tend to examine large units of analysis, such as international systems and state levels.<sup>30</sup> According to this theory, no single individual, group, or class purposely organizes or reproduces complex determined conflicts that may cause revolutions and other global political crisis. So, structuralists simply deny that deliberate human actions lead to large political outcomes.<sup>31</sup> For example, the Russian Revolution was not made by the proletariat class or the Bolsheviks, and Lenin as a leader in this case only contributed to the revolution in Russia in 1917, but did not play a vital role in the historically necessary trend of state-led industrialization in Russia.<sup>32</sup>

In contrast, the rational choice theory performs analysis on an individual level, and denies other theories. Rational choice theory considers the structuralist approach as pleonastic and redundant, and without precise concepts. For its supporters, any collective actions, systems, and groups make their decisions based on an individual's decisions, and those individuals' strategic relationships with each other help to understand collective actions. Nothing is important, except the individual.<sup>33</sup>

Unlike the aforementioned two theories mentioned, SMT emphasizes groups in examining collective action. While accepting that in rational choice theory individuals play an important role, SMT still argues that individuals cannot be separated from the contingent where other people, networks, and groups exist. Because an individual's

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<sup>29</sup> Glenn E. Robinson, " Hamas as Social Movement," in *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, ed. Quinton Wiktorowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 112–139.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

<sup>32</sup> Jack A. Goldstone, "Is Revolution Individually Rational? Groups and Individuals in Revolutionary Collective Action," *Rationality and Society* 6, no. 1 (1994): 200.

<sup>33</sup> Robinson, " Hamas as Social Movement."

decision making cannot be accepted without those groups, the proper unit of analysis is the group.<sup>34</sup>

SMT has different models, such as the Classical Model of SMT, Resource Mobilization, and Political Process. The Classical Model initially was focused on the structural and psychological causes of mass mobilization, rather than political causes. A psychological sense of isolation and weakness in the face of broad social changes was supposed to shift individuals to join social movements.<sup>35</sup> The Resource Mobilization theory is more concentrated on the mobilization process and the formal organizational manifestation of these processes, and its psychological aspects were ignored.<sup>36</sup> The Political Process model, an alternative to both previously mentioned models, conveys two insights that include the perspectives of both models. First, it contains and expresses a political phenomenon rather than a psychological one. Second, movements represent long-term processes rather than many separate, developmental levels.<sup>37</sup>

The political process model focuses on three major factors. The first one is political opportunity, which analyzes the historical and current context of a movement. The second one is resource mobilization, based on the capacity and ability to mobilize given internal and external dynamics. The last one is the framing process, which generates resonance and support for mobilization. These three factors will be discussed in more detail.

### C. POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY

“Social movements and revolutions are shaped by the broader set of political constraints and opportunities unique to national context in which they are embedded,” observes Doug McAdam.<sup>38</sup> Collective action is built on available political opportunities.

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<sup>34</sup> Robinson, “ Hamas as Social Movement.”

<sup>35</sup> Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 18.

<sup>36</sup> Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>37</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 36.

<sup>38</sup> McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, 3.

The political structure in the environment in which the movements occur promotes or constrains events based on the actions and attitudes of the supporters of that structure. During protests, changes occur not only among inactive or conventionally directed groups, but in the political system in which they exist. Any events or broad social processes—such as demographic changes, wars, industrialization, continuous unemployment—that lead to change in status quo of a certain system is a window to political opportunity.<sup>39</sup> Classical theorists may argue that industrialization also creates a strain which could cause a collective action. However, its action will be a directed one and follows an immediate movement emergence.<sup>40</sup>

Political opportunity has elements that send signals to political and social actors to facilitate or form social movements. Political opportunity underlines not only state institutions, but also alliance structures. There are four types of signals: an opening of access to power, a shifting alignment, the availability of influential allies, and cleavages within and among elites.<sup>41</sup> In the first, the opening up of political access, rational people will not attack an opponent when they do not have an opportunity. For instance, in the late 1980s, perestroika gave an opportunity for people to create political action and organize protest movements. The second signal is unstable alignment, perhaps connected to electoral instability. When a new coalition is created, elites may seek provisions from outside, inducing an insurgency to exercise its power.<sup>42</sup> Peasants revolted in the First Russian revolution when they saw rebelling against authority was an auspicious step, creating a door of opportunity to a hierarchical system.<sup>43</sup> Even though the peasants could not get everything they demanded, they gained more confidence for the next uprisings. They already had solidarity and an “indigenous network.”

The third aspect of political opportunity is influential allies. This is vital because influential allies can act as friends and protectors against authoritarian government, or as

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<sup>39</sup> Peter K. Eisinger, “The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities,” *The American Political Science Review* (1973): 11–28.

<sup>40</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*.

<sup>41</sup> McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, 54.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> “History of Russia,” History Notes, <http://historynotes.ru/revolyutsiya-1905-1907-godov/>.

rational negotiators.<sup>44</sup> Gorbachev declared to the communist regimes of Eastern Europe that elites of those countries could not rely upon the Red Army, which was an open signal for insurgents to organize their social protests. The fourth aspect of political opportunity is divided elites. Conflict among elites always propels opposing groups to engage in collective action. Divided elites are a stimulus for unrepresented, resource-poor groups and are a boost to hold a “tribune of the people” in order to attain their political goals.<sup>45</sup>

#### **D. MOBILIZING STRUCTURE**

Social movements do not only depend on political opportunity. In order to confront an opponent, they have to have a cohesive mobilized mass. Sometimes social movements are able to mobilize, but sometimes not. McAdam describes mobilizing structures as “*collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action.*”<sup>46</sup> That is, they serve as the methods and ways a movement organizes, shapes, and builds its membership. The majority of these have been the resource-mobilizing theories mentioned earlier. The ability to raise material resources and mobilize masses will have a direct effect on activists’ common goals to succeed.<sup>47</sup> Mobilizing structures could be formal and informal social institutions. Furthermore, these structures occurs in everyday life in social situations, such as family units, friendship networks, voluntary associations, religious networks (people in churches or mosques), and work networks. Distinguishing among four types of formal organizations helps to understand mobilizing structure. These types are social movement organizations (SMOs), movement associations, supportive organizations, and parties and interest groups. SMOs have criteria, such as mobilizing the public for collective action, and they conduct these activities for political goals. Second, movement associations are created by the movements themselves in order to supply members’ needs. They are self-

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<sup>44</sup> William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1975).

<sup>45</sup> McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 143.

help organizations, clubs, and voluntary associations. “Creation of commitment” and “consensus mobilization” is indirect contributions of the movement associations.<sup>48</sup>

Organizations such as churches, mosques, educational institutions, and media do their job without direct involvement in mobilization for collective action. Those organizations may contribute by sympathizing and sharing grievances, but they would be indirect action. The fourth one is parties and interest groups. They have political goals, but they do not directly participate.<sup>49</sup>

Leaders contribute to mobilization of the masses. Leaders can be people-oriented or task-oriented. Task-oriented leaders are “pragmatic” or “rationalized” leaders. People-oriented leaders direct their effort to evoking an emotional state in people to motivate them to become devoted to a particular movement. Some scholars have distinguished a difference between autocratic and democratic leaders. They say autocratic leaders are task-oriented and democratic leaders are people-oriented.<sup>50</sup> However, leaders are not a vitally important part of a social movement, and by themselves are impotent.

When movements are not able to obtain resources, third-party intervention may occur. Since this assessment considers the group that developed in an authoritarian post-Soviet country, Uzbekistan, the emphasis inclines towards an autocratic regime rather than a democratic one. As in every society, interpersonal relationships play a crucial role even in a repressive regime. Political organizations that were banned transform into underground organizations that operate covertly. They are not able to operate overtly because there are no opportunities for a mobilizing process.<sup>51</sup> Repression also contributes to the mobilizing structure. State repression could be selective when it targets only leaders of social movements. Nonetheless, when it starts to target everybody, including

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<sup>48</sup> Bert Klandermans and Sidney Tarrow, “Mobilization into Social Movements: Synthesizing European and American Approaches,” *International Social Movement Research* 1, no. 1 (1988): 1–38.

<sup>49</sup> McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

<sup>50</sup> Ron Aminzade, Jack A. Goldstone, and Elizabeth J. Perry, “Leadership Dynamics and Dynamics of Contention,” in *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 126–154.

<sup>51</sup> Maryjane Osa, “Networks in Opposition: Linking Organizations through Activists in the Polish People’s Republic,” in *Social Movements and Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 77–104.



supporters, sympathizers, and other innocent people it becomes indiscriminate repression.<sup>52</sup> In fact, indiscriminate repression may push occasional activist supporters of the social movements to seek the protection of radical groups. The civil war in Tajikistan demonstrates how Islamic opposition gained popular support because of the state's brutal repression.<sup>53</sup> For a community where mosques play a crucial role in terms of mobilization, it is similar to the role of churches in the civil-rights movement in the United States.<sup>54</sup> Since mosques have legal rights to teach "pure Islam" governments mostly do not scrutinize them. However, in recent years regimes have broadened their control over religious institutions.

In some countries, groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas provide social services to the population in order to sustain existences. Islamic non-government organizations provide basic needs, such as medical clinics, charity societies, and cultural centers, and send messages to the population,<sup>55</sup> especially in poor communities where people need help. All of these efforts not only help the population, but participation itself unites individuals and social interaction happens. Every group develops a method of attracting people, as Islamic radicals present their friendly face to the public, which gives them an opportunity to avoid confrontation with a regime.<sup>56</sup>

Student associations and professional affiliations are also used by Islamic activists to mobilize the masses. After the decline of leftist ideology, many Islamic movements have controlled a variety of institutions and associations in order to use them to disperse messages.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Mohammed Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Aldon Morris and Cedric Herring, "Theory and Research in Social Movements: A Critical Review," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1984): 137–193.

<sup>55</sup> Quinton Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

<sup>56</sup> Janine A. Clark, *Islam, Charity, and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

<sup>57</sup> Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

Mobilizing through political parties can be useful. It still can work in democratic societies, but in autocratic states, it may become a problem. In many countries, such as Jordan, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Yemen, political parties have gained more success in municipal and parliamentary elections.<sup>58</sup> However, they could easily be banned by authoritarian regimes. The importance of social networks under high-risk activism only strengthens social ties, trust, and solidarity and encourages individuals to join in the activism.<sup>59</sup> Use of informal organizations and institutions for mobilization is prevalent in less liberal societies, where a government is dominated by autocratic features and democracy is invisible. An autocratic regime controls every segment of a political sphere, and a group or movement becomes a target for repression. It is reasonable to use an informal mobilizing structure in order for the movement to succeed, because it is invulnerable and out of a state's control.<sup>60</sup>

#### **E. FRAMING PROCESS**

McAdam defines the framing process “as mediating between opportunity, organization, and action with the shared meanings and definitions that people bring to their situation.”<sup>61</sup> The shared understanding of the world and themselves by a group of individuals, their common ideology, leads them to attain a common goal.<sup>62</sup> Culture and ideology are components of the framing process. Culture is the understandings and shared beliefs referred by some symbols and language of a particular group. Ideology is the system of ideals that forms the foundation of political theory and policy. In the framing process, actors play important roles in generating frames, and they can be related to different audiences inside and outside of movements. Political opportunity and mobilizing structure interconnect to shape the outcomes of the framing process.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*.

<sup>59</sup> McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

<sup>60</sup> Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*.

<sup>61</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

“Frames are the specific metaphors, symbolic representations, and cognitive cues used to render or cast behavior and events in an evaluative mode and to suggest alternative modes of action,” interprets McAdam. Ideologies and beliefs leave huge footprints in history, especially when they have been used in movements and revolutions. The framing process is a trigger mechanism to create core beliefs. For example, Nazi Germany used a swastika flag that became a symbol of egotism. The Nazis narrative was about “The Aryan Race,” where other nations and peoples were considered as subhuman. Hitler, who was leader of the Nazis, always talked publicly about and addressed his audience concerning the presumed superiority of the Aryan Race.<sup>64</sup> All these elements are important in the framing process, and in the absence of one, it might not work. The Al-Qaida terrorist group leader Osama Bin Laden, used narratives—such as Islam is the only solution, defense for the Muslim, vilification of the U.S., and how unjust they were. Framing processes show what injustice is, and demonize or canonize a target.<sup>65</sup> They are able to convert likeminded individuals to favor evil. There are many ways how framing processes work, and they may be through face-to face interaction or media—magazines, books, newspapers, radio, Internet, and television. A platform for the framing processes may be cafes, restaurants, meeting halls, pubs, or any places for socializing and interacting. On the cognitive level, the perception of acquired information through newspapers and TV is different.<sup>66</sup> The media is more likely to evoke an emotional response through using images, sounds, and videos. In democratic societies, it is easier to act, because there are not as many constraints as in autocratic regimes, where media and newspapers are strictly controlled. For example, communist ideology in the Soviet Union was as effective as the Nazi propaganda in Germany. Children were brainwashed since childhood. TV transmitted patriotic movies where the Russian soldiers fought against Nazis, and the capitalist West was considered as a threat.<sup>67</sup> To his audience, Martin

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<sup>64</sup> V.V. Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, 271.

<sup>67</sup> “10 Disturbing Pieces of Nazi Propaganda,” Master of Education.org, <http://www.master-of-education.org/10-disturbing-pieces-of-nazi-education-propaganda/>.

Luther King used emotional rhetoric, where African-American religious culture embraced in rhetoric, and resonated in American political themes.<sup>68</sup> There are three essential framing tasks for social movements. First, movements build frames that identify a state as a problem that is needed to be restored. This comprises an attribution of responsibilities and targets of blame. Second, movements develop solutions to these problems, which consist of tactics and strategies directed to eliminate injustice.<sup>69</sup>

David A. Snow, Robert Benford, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., and Steven K. Worden rank frame resonance as the most critical dimension of the framing process for a movement. The transformation of mobilization potential into a real mobilization is a contribution of frame resonance.<sup>70</sup> This reverberation depends on not only its community with a cultural narrative, but also the reputation of those who are responsible for enunciating the frames.

As in many other social movements followed by identity issues, culture, and post-materialism, Islamic movements are involved in struggles over meanings and values. The goals of many Islamic movements are to create an Islamic state under an Islamic law (sharia). However, in order to build that state, movements should have credibility. One of the methods to build credibility is framing processes.

The framing process contributes to the mobilization process by its framing core tasks of diagnostics, prognostics, and motivational framings. Diagnostic framing focuses on the issues by diagnosing some aspect of social life or the system of government as a problem that needs to be repaired or restored, and attributes blaming or responsibility. It tries to answer the questions “What went wrong?” and “Who or what is to blame?” Blaming the Western values that help the current regime responsible for a dwindling economy and rising unemployment are crucial components of the diagnostic frame.<sup>71</sup> For example, humanitarian aid from the United States and Western countries to Afghanistan

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<sup>68</sup> McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

<sup>69</sup> Robert D. Benford, “Frame Disputes within the Nuclear Disarmament Movement,” *Social Forces* 71, no. 3 (1993): 677–701.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*.

and Iraq were represented as an invasion and subjugation of the motherland. Prognostic framing mainly addresses the problem of action and mobilization by stipulating solutions and the tactics for achieving these objectives. The prognostic framing addresses the question, “What is to be done?” From Osama bin Laden to his Al-Qaeda followers:

We—with God’s help—call on every Muslim ... to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it. We also call on Muslim *ulema*, leaders, youths, and soldiers to launch the raid on Satan’s U.S. troops and the devil’s supporters allying with them, and to displace those who are behind them so that they may learn a lesson.<sup>72</sup>

Motivational framing is “the elaboration of a call to arms or rationale for action that goes beyond the diagnosis and prognosis.”<sup>73</sup> Discontent with the regime is not enough for people to risk their lives. A strong commitment needs to overcome the fear. The Iranian Revolution is a good example of cleric leaders who played a vital role in motivational framing. It was portrayed as the equivalent of a “Holy War,” and that death is a reward of “martyrdom.”<sup>74</sup> Similarly, bin Laden’s interest in religious duty and commitment during his 1998 fatwa, stated, “[T]he ruling to kill Americans and their allies ... is an *individual duty for every Muslim* who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it.”<sup>75</sup>

During Islamic movements, most framing happens in mosques. In mosques, people interrelate with one another face-to-face and with imams, who are able to easily shape people’s minds through emotional rhetoric. The religious literature, interpreted by radical Islamists, is very effective. All of these features contribute to establish a loyalty. Poor economic conditions alone cannot be a trigger for Islamic activism, because many terrorist leaders are not poor. For instance, Osama Bin Laden, who led Al-Qaida, was one of the richest men in the world. Many deprived people live happy lives in rural areas of a

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<sup>72</sup> David A. Snow and Scott C. Byrd, “Ideology, Framing Processes, and Islamic Terrorist Movements,” *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (2007), 119–136.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

country. The framing processes transform and shape all these elements into collective action.

## **F. ANALYSIS OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL IMPORTANCE IN CENTRAL ASIA**

The greatest advantage in Central Asia's landlocked territory in the past was that it bordered Afghanistan and Iran to the south, China to the east, and Russia to the north and the west. A bulk of the black gold of the Caspian Sea that borders with the Central Asian steppe, the Hindu Kush, Pamir, and Tian Shan ranges, make this region more attractive and unattainable.<sup>76</sup> In the north, the Kazakh steppe merges into Siberia with no clear geographical limitations. "The land between two rivers "the Amu Darya (Oxus) and Sir Darya (Jaxartes) was once named Central Asia. Those two rivers played an important geographical, political, and cultural role in this region. For instance, the Amu Darya separated the nomadic Turkic and Mongol empires from the Persian Empire. Sir Darya protected Central Asian khanates from systematic incursion by other tribes.<sup>77</sup> The Pamir Mountains, which mostly cover Tajikistan and the Tian Shan Mountains stretching to the east and north of the Pamir, the Himalayas to the southeast, and Hindu Kush to the south, created a formidable fortress for some tribes to protect against external invasion. Along with rivers and mountains, there are two of the largest deserts in the world. One is Kara-Kum (Black Sands) Desert in Turkmenistan, and the other is Kyzyl-Kum (Red Sands) Desert in Uzbekistan. The sparsely populated land made Central Asia attractive for conquest, but difficult to rule: Empires were begun and ended systematically within its history;<sup>78</sup> however, its terrain remains forever.

The Russian Empire absorbed much of Central Asia, but it did not physically change Central Asia. Such changes did not occur until the Soviet Union emerged. The Soviets changed the landscape, buildings, irrigation networks, and industrial institutions. During the World War II many people from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus were transported into the heart of Central Asia, especially Kazakhstan.

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<sup>76</sup> Ahmed, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, 26.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

In terms of religion, the geographical conditions made it difficult for Islam to spread. Under Soviet rule assimilation of ethnic groups played a vital role in terms of secularism and religious activity of these groups. Although Kazakhstan was the most secular state within Central Asia, its ethnic diversity was displayed through more than 130 ethnic groups.<sup>79</sup> Also, the Russians tried to remove religion from politics, because once the population embraces a religion, it is easy to manipulate and use as an “instrument” of war against any government.

In Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, there were fewer numbers of Russians, indicating that these countries were located further away from Russia. In these countries religion played a crucial role in the lives of their citizens. The closer states were located to the Russia, the more secular they were.

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<sup>79</sup> Embassy of the Republic of the Kazakhstan. “Ethnic Groups,” Globescope, <http://www.kazakhembus.com/page/ethnic-groups>.

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### III. THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN INSURGENCY

#### A. BACKGROUND

The IMU is a group of militants from Uzbekistan, other Central Asian states, and Europe. In 1991, as a party, it was comprised of approximately 500 members.<sup>80</sup> It was established by Uzbek youth who were against the pro-communist government. Tohir Yuldashev (Figure 1), a 24-year-old local mullah and college dropout, was a brilliant speaker who led the young men against Uzbekistan's communist and later pro-communist government. Another IMU leader was 22-year-old Jumaboi Khojaev, who later adopted the pseudonym Juma Namangani. He was a formidable man in terms of military strategies and tactics. In 1987, Namangani served as a conscript in the Soviet Army in Afghanistan as a paratrooper, where he gained admiration from Afghan Mujahedeen who fought against the Soviets.<sup>81</sup> Yuldashev and Namangani were founding leaders of the IMU.<sup>82</sup>



Figure 1. Tahir Yuldashev, IMU leader.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> UN site research. "The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/NSQE01001E.shtml>.

<sup>81</sup> Ahmed, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*.

<sup>82</sup> Tuyluoglu Mazhar, "The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," Middle East Technical University, Eurasia Studies. n.d., n.p., [http://www.academia.edu/1214053/The\\_Islamic\\_Movement\\_of\\_Uzbekistan\\_IMU\\_](http://www.academia.edu/1214053/The_Islamic_Movement_of_Uzbekistan_IMU_).

<sup>83</sup> "Tahir Yuldashev," <http://occident.blogspot.com/2010/09/in-pictures-waziristan-connections-ii.html>.

In 2000, the IMU was listed by the U.S. State Department as a terrorist organization. It was tightly connected to the Taliban, and was involved in drug trafficking from Afghanistan to other Central Asian states, though the Taliban back then opposed the drug trade. Before the IMU was established, its members created a party called Adolat (justice), and tried to overthrow the secular president of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov (Figure 2), and establish an Islamic Caliphate. In 1992, after unsuccessful attempts to revolt against the government, the party was banned and its members fled from Uzbekistan.



Figure 2. Islam Karimov, president of Uzbekistan.<sup>84</sup>

When the civil war broke out in Tajikistan in 1992, Yuldashev left Tajikistan for Afghanistan, while Namangani was fighting in the civil war.<sup>85</sup> Islamic militants tried to seize the opportunity within the economically and politically weakened governments to change them into an Islamic Caliphate. In 1998, Yuldashev arrived in Kabul, where he was given a house by Mullah Omar and Bin Laden. Together, they announced the creation of the IMU, and declared Jihad against the Karimov regime.<sup>86</sup> The Islamization policy could not be stopped in Uzbekistan because the Soviet Union collapsed, and there were no longer any restrictions from Moscow. On February 16, 1999, in attempt to

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<sup>84</sup> “President Karimov,” Tumblr, <https://www.tumblr.com/search/omar+al-bashir>.

<sup>85</sup> Ahmed, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, 140.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 148.

assassinate the president, the IMU members exploded six car bombs in Tashkent. There were also armed clashes with police forces on Independence Square—meant to be one of the most secure places. Because of these attacks, 13 people were killed, and 128 were injured.<sup>87</sup> In August 1999, Namangani sent some of his loyal men into Kyrgyz plain, where many Kyrgyz enclaves were located. Those men kidnapped a mayor and three officials of a small village west of Osh. They demanded one million dollars in ransom, and a helicopter to get into Afghanistan. The terrorists got what they wanted, and the Kyrgyz government paid them \$50,000 in ransom. President Karimov was angry and disappointed about the Kyrgyz act, and sent Uzbek bombers to attack towns of Tavildara and Garm, where Namanagni lived. As a result, there were many civilian casualties including Tajik people.<sup>88</sup>

In 2001, the IMU became a powerful military organization with 10,000 members stationed in Afghanistan.<sup>89</sup> It was able to conduct a full-spectrum of combat operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan regions. The IMU had modern weaponry, anti-aircraft missiles, and armored vehicles, such as Boevaya Mashina Pehoty (BMPs) and Bronyetransportyery (BTRs), and rocket launchers, including the RSZO-BM ‘Grad.’<sup>90</sup> The IMU militants were experienced in guerilla warfare, especially fighting in mountainous areas. Its military infrastructure included training camps in Afghan provinces—such as Mazari-Sharif, Kunduz, and Kabul—where recruits went through training camps, and formed into smaller groups.<sup>91</sup> The most skilled recruits had the chance to train in Al-Qaida camps in Afghanistan.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> “1999 Bombings in Tashkent: Terrorist Attack of Islamists or Special Services.” Fergana news, last modified February 16, 2012, <http://www.fergananews.com/articles/7280>.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Said Amin, “Survivability of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan,” Eastern Time, last modified July 29, 2013, <http://easttime.ru/analytics/uzbekistan/zhiyuchest-islamskogo-dvizheniya-uzbekistana/4460>.

<sup>90</sup> “Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan,” Analitika.org, last modified February 2012, <http://analitika.org>.

<sup>91</sup> “Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan,” last modified February 2012, <http://analitika.org>.

<sup>92</sup> Ruzaliev Odil, “The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: Lines to Complete the Portrait,” Central Asia and the Caucasus, <http://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/the-islamic-movement-of-uzbekistan-lines-to-complete-the-portrait>.

The IMU paid recruits \$100 to \$500 per month, based on their tasks. To support the IMU, money was received from Al-Qaida, international terrorist organizations, and the Uzbek diaspora in Saudi Arabia.<sup>93</sup> The terrorist organizations sometimes clashed with local criminals, who were also involved in drug trafficking. These types of clashes exacerbated instability in Afghanistan. Because the IMU and the Taliban were connected to each other, the latter helped with provision.<sup>94</sup> It is known Yuldashev took an oath of allegiance to Taliban leader Mullah Omar.<sup>95</sup> Both terrorist organizations were deeply involved in drug trafficking.

In 2002, Namangani trained terrorists and planned to invade Uzbekistan. However, in 2001, Namangani was killed by the U.S. and Coalition Forces that invaded Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks.<sup>96</sup> Unable to withstand the U.S. offensives, Yuldashev relocated the IMU fighters to the Waziristan Federally Administrated Tribal Area (FATA).<sup>97</sup> In August 2009, the second IMU leader, Yuldashev, was the next killed by a U.S. drone attack. Some sources say that when those two leaders were killed, the next leader of the IMU became Usman Adil (Figure 3), who was also killed in 2012. The current leader of the IMU is Usman Gazi (Figure 4).

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<sup>93</sup> Svante E. Cornell, "Narcotics, Radicalism, and Armed Conflict in Central Asia: The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 17, no. 4 (2005): 619–639.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Naumkin, 97.

<sup>96</sup> Svante, "Narcotics, Radicalism, and Armed Conflict in Central Asia: The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan."

<sup>97</sup> John C.K. Daly, "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Flirts with ISIS," Silk Road Reporters, last modified October 13, 2014, <http://www.silkroadreporters.com/2014/10/13/islamic-movement-uzbekistan-flirts-isis/>.



Figure 3. Usman Adil, IMU leader.<sup>98</sup>



Figure 4. Usman Ghazi, current leader of the IMU.<sup>99</sup>

Since September 11, the IMU activities have not been consistent. IMU, however, does show a capability to conduct terrorist acts. For example, in June 8, 2014, ten IMU fighters wearing suicide vests and armed with Kalashnikov rifles attacked and destroyed many fighter jets and American drones in the airport of Karachi, Pakistan. This attack left at least 39 dead, including the ten militants.<sup>100</sup> Persistent Pakistani armed forces' attacks

<sup>98</sup> "Usman Adil," <http://occident.blogspot.com/2010/09/in-pictures-waziristan-connections-ii.html>.

<sup>99</sup> "Doen Fahri, "MuqawamahMedia, last modified June 14, 2014, <http://muqawamah.com/pesan-dari-amir-harakah-islam-uzbekistan-syaikh-usman-ghazi-kepada-seluruh-amir-di-khurasan.html>.

<sup>100</sup> Murat Sadykov, "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Claims Karachi Airport Attack," Eurasia.net.org, last modified July 11, 2014, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/68526>.

and other operations have kept the IMU incapable of gaining enough resources and opportunities. In September 29, the IMU leader Usman Gazi announced that his group had joined the Islamic State (IS), which is the most powerful terrorist organization today. In late September 2014, 17 members of the IMU were killed in the battleground of Syria.<sup>101</sup>

## **B. POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY**

Political institutions, alliances, and policy shifts can send signals that encourage or discourage collective action. There were changes in the external environment that led to specific changes in the opportunities available for social movement. This section will discuss political opportunities that helped or undermined the IMU's chances for success. The first global opportunity was the collapse of the Soviet Union, followed by economic deprivation, and social alienation, which provided a fertile ground for the emergence of the social movement. The second, a more minor opportunity, was the civil war in Tajikistan. The radicalized Uzbeks tried to use these political opportunities, where the government became vulnerable and weak, against the pro-communist government.

There are some stages that correspond to these political opportunities:

- First, from 1980 to 1990, the people of Eurasia struggled. This period was associated with political ambiguity, low morale, and material deprivation before the collapse of the Soviet Union. People wanted to fill the gap in their lives, and found it in religion and customs, which the radicals provided.<sup>102</sup>
- Second, during *perestroika*, Islamic organizations were unified against communism. However, later those organizations started to fight against political opponents to gain their place in the government. From that point, they became religious extremists and fundamentalists. Political spaces were filled by Islamic organizations, which were oriented by Wahhabis and fundamentalism.

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<sup>101</sup> Vestnik Kavakaza. "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Joins ISIS," last modified October 6, 2014, <http://vestnikkavkaza.net/news/politics/60716.html>.

<sup>102</sup> Ahmed, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*.

### C. ADOLAT PARTY AS A PREDECESSOR OF THE IMU

Uzbekistan suffered like other Central Asian states from the Soviet system, and that only gave strength to Islamic radicalism. A group of young men led by two leaders of the Adolat (Justice) Party tried to participate in the political processes of Uzbekistan and propose goals to create an Islamic state under sharia rule. In 1990, Islam Karimov was elected president of Uzbek SSR. In 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed, and Karimov became the president of the independent Uzbekistan.<sup>103</sup> This was a crisis period for Russia and its satellites, because economic conditions dwindled, unemployment increased, and the population needed support morally and economically. The Soviet Union no longer existed, but Central Asia's problems were far from over.<sup>104</sup> The weakened Uzbek state was a good target for the Adolat Islamists to expand their anti-government campaign and establish an Islamic state. Poverty and unemployment drastically increased as high as 80 percent.<sup>105</sup> In 1991 Adolat party members organized riots in Namangan. The angry mob had already seized the building of the local government, with a demand to meet with the president and declare Uzbekistan as an Islamic state.<sup>106</sup> During that meeting in 1991, Yuldashev made Karimov give an oath that he would change the constitution of Uzbekistan, and incorporate norms of sharia law. Yuldashev insulted him in public, for which Karimov never forgave him.<sup>107</sup> Karimov compromised with the public that then mostly supported the Islamic state. This demand was not met; however, and Karimov pursued repressive efforts. Uzbekistan is the country with an ungainly governmental system. This system makes impossible and illegitimate efforts by movements or groups to participate in formal policymaking and in their place chooses to repress them.<sup>108</sup> Islam Karimov is the pro-communist President of Uzbekistan,

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<sup>103</sup> Karagiannis, *Political Islam in Central Asia*, 22.

<sup>104</sup> Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, 56.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> "Rewriting History ... Myths about Karimov Uzbek Media," Ozodlik radiosi, last modified August 24, 2011, <http://www.ozodlik.org/content/article/24306207.html>.

<sup>107</sup> "Karimov in Namangan," YouTube video, 12:46, posted by TurkistonTV, August 20, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwVS8CQg2s4>.

<sup>108</sup> Hafez, Mohammed, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 28.

who has been ruling his country up to the present. He knows about Islamic groups' threats, and that they would be a problem for his steered policy. His ideology could not accept that. Islamization in Uzbekistan has moved in parallel with Karimov's de-Islamization policy.<sup>109</sup> He has targeted Islamic fundamentalist groups in the Fergana Valley. However, besides fundamentalists, many ordinary pious Muslims wrongly accused of being Salafists fell under these repressive campaigns. As a part of those repressions, in 1992 the Adolat was banned. As a predecessor of the IMU, the Adolat lost the opportunity to participate in the political process. Despite the crisis, Karimov could successfully target Islamists and put them on a short leash. These people, who did not accept the government policy, fled the country for Tajikistan, Iran, and Afghanistan.<sup>110</sup> Unsuccessful attempts by the Adolat to participate in the political process forced Juma Namangani to flee to Tajikistan, where the civil war started. Meanwhile, Yuldashev went to other Islamic states such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Iran to seek financial and other support to take revenge on Karimov.<sup>111</sup>

In 1992 Tajikistan felt under a civil war that continued until 1996. This civil war was the second opportunity for the IMU members. Namangani settled down in the Karategin Valley and Gorno-Badakhshan, where he occasionally organized terrorist acts against the government forces. He had the Soviet paratrooper background, so he was valuable for Islamists, who fought against pro-Soviet Tajik forces.<sup>112</sup> In 1996, exhausted from the civil war, Tajik opposition and the government sought to arrange a peace agreement. Namangani, who supported Tajik opposition, refused to accept a peace settlement, because he knew that it was his last opportunity on this territory. His logic follows the "frustration-aggression" approach where political violence and rebellion are tied directly to feelings of deprivation that arise out of unfulfilled expectations.<sup>113</sup> However, in 1997, the Tajik government compromised and signed an agreement with the

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<sup>109</sup> R.C. Bobohanov, "Islam in Post-Soviet Uzbekistan," Gulnarainanch, last modified February 24, 2014, <http://www.turkishnews.com/ru/content/2014/02/27/>.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>113</sup> Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World*, 17.



Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) that deprived Uzbek radical Islamists a last chance in this territory. Uzbek radicals failed a second time to use a political opportunity.<sup>114</sup> The war between Uzbek Islamists and Karimov continued. In response to an Uzbek officer who was killed by Islamists in December 2, 1997, Karimov conducted an anti-religious campaign where religious leaders in Uzbekistan disappeared. The Uzbek government passed a Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations and banned unregistered mosques and madrasahs, most of which were located in Fergana Valley. Of 4,200 mosques in Uzbekistan, 2,430 were located in Fergana Valley.<sup>115</sup> Because it was unsafe to stay in Uzbekistan, with no support in Tajikistan, in 1998 Yuldashev and Namangani fled to Afghanistan and settled down in Kabul. Yuldashev was given a house by the Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad Omar and Osama bin Laden. In summer 1998 Yuldashev and Namangani, with support of Taliban and Al-Qaida leaders, announced the creation of the IMU.

After the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001, the U.S. and coalition forces started operations against the Taliban, where the IMU supported the Taliban and Al-Qaida. The Taliban was defeated as well as the IMU, and their members fled Afghanistan to neighboring countries such as Pakistan.<sup>116</sup> After its founding leaders were terminated the IMU leader became Osman Adil, who was also killed in 2012.<sup>117</sup> The current IMU leader is Osman Gazi. The IMU has kept its main goals about establishing an Islamic state in Uzbekistan and Central Asia. However, by this time it has adjusted to a new environment. Its structure has changed from that of a spider to a starfish. This means that it has changed from being centralized organization to a decentralized one, which today operates in the FATAs of Pakistan and Afghanistan. IMU maintains its connection to Al-Qaida and the Taliban. Terrorist acts that took place in 2008 in the Shapkadar district of Peshawar show that the IMU will use any opportunities and still has the strength to attack. The target of the attack was a Pashtun politician Afrasiab Hattak, who is a secular

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<sup>114</sup> Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, 142.

<sup>115</sup> Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World*, 146.

<sup>116</sup> V.V. Naumkin, "Evolution of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," <http://islamica.ru/?uid=98>

<sup>117</sup> Nikita Mendkovich, "What is the IMU?" last modified October 22, 2010, <http://navoine.info/chto-takoe-idu.html>.

ideologist. He was the only survivor of the attack, which killed 25 people.<sup>118</sup> As the counterterrorism operation in the Swat region has revealed, many captured terrorists come from Central Asian countries. In September 2009 a convoy of Tajik forces was exposed to an attack by the terrorist group Jamaat Ansarulla, which had ties with the IMU.<sup>119</sup> In this attack 23 government forces were killed. In the same year, in Hudjand city of Tajikistan, two suicide car bombers were killed, as well as one police officer, and 30 people were injured. Ahmed Rashid contends: ‘Even though, the IMU has changed and has many small branches of groups, it has kept its ideas about a Central Asian Islamic state and seeks an opportunity to take advantage.’<sup>120</sup>

#### **D. MOBILIZING STRUCTURE**

In this section, we discuss the ability to mobilize support for the IMU through different formal and informal institutions, and external support. Leadership, connective structures, and operational cells (grassroots) contribute to the mobilizing structure.<sup>121</sup> Leaders are important vanguards of social movements, though not a main driving power. Many scholars argue that without leadership the structure of social movements become fragile and soon split.<sup>122</sup> Yuldashev and Namangani played a vital role in forming the social movement. Mosques and madrasahs have legitimacy as institutional organizations where radical elements could penetrate. Salafism was not prevalent, but existed to the some degree in Fergana Valley. Salafist imams replaced many traditional imams, who were loyal to the government and propagated a traditional Islam.<sup>123</sup> Converted Salafist disciples followed Rahmatulla Qari, Imam Abdul Ahad, who was a devoted Wahhabi and preached in the Ata Wali Khan Tura mosque in Namangan.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Abu-Bakr Sydyk, “The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Has Recruited More and More Immigrants from Central Asia,” last modified December 28, 2012, [http://rus.azattyq.org/content/imu\\_central\\_asia/2251337.html](http://rus.azattyq.org/content/imu_central_asia/2251337.html).

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Sidney G. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>122</sup> Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics*, 125.

<sup>123</sup> Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle*.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 58.

Furthermore, the Soviet repressive regime played a contributing role. People were dissatisfied with the government, which did not care about people in the Fergana Valley. In the 1990s the Adolat Party, already led by Tahir Youldashev and Juma Namangani, served as a kind of replacement to corrupt and idle law-enforcement agencies. In addition, members of the Adolat started controlling local market prices.<sup>125</sup> Those militants saw that local people started admiring them, especially when their acts were followed by religious speeches, tirades against inequality and the regime's despotism, and calls for justice. Many young people started attending mosques and embraced Wahhabism and Salafism. Those mosques were located in Namangan, Margelan, Andijan and others places. As the militants began to grow in number, they received political support from foreign missionaries and preachers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other Muslim countries.<sup>126</sup> Many Arabs belonging to Al-Qaida began to infiltrate the Fergana Valley, but their organizational work was not good enough to sustain the social movement. There was no unifying platform among militants, and the movement was followed by constant fragmentation. In addition, its ideological basis was weak and always contradicted traditional Islam. For example, in the late 1990s one of the Wahhabi youth groups who followed Imam Abdul Ahad from Gumbaz mosque in the Fergana Valley failed to support Yuldashev by refusing to take part in the political movement against the government.<sup>127</sup> This refusal revealed that connective structures among the radical groups were weak, followed by a low level of solidarity.

The most important role has been played by mosques. In 1990 Saudi's money helped build new mosques and madrasahs in Namangan and the Fergana Valley.<sup>128</sup> Yuldashev's trips to other Muslims countries helped him to build a network. At the same time, he had a connection with Pakistan Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) which helped run the Afghan war against the Soviets. The ISI willingly helped Yuldashev with provisions. The foreign support from other terrorist groups and diaspora from Saudi Arabia played a

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle*, 58.

<sup>128</sup> Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, 138.

vital role as well. At the end of the 1980s the number of Muslim people in Uzbekistan had increased. In fact, more than 90 percent of the population identified themselves as Muslims. Similarly, the number of mosques drastically increased from 300 in 1989 to 6,000 in 1993.<sup>129</sup>

The Adolat was active primarily in the Fergana Valley and Namangan. It is the most uncontrolled and religious places in that region, where representatives of three countries, including Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, share neighborhoods. It includes three districts of Kyrgyzstan (Jelal-abad–0.9 million people, Osh–0.9 million people, and Batkent–0.4 million), three districts of Uzbekistan (Namangan–1.8 million, Andijan–2.2 million, and Fergana–1.2 million), and Sogdian district of Tajikistan (2.0 million people).<sup>130</sup> Since the Fergana Valley is an isolated place, its socio-economic condition is poor due to overpopulation, and scarce water and land. The government regime controls this area only in repressive way, and has done nothing to improve people's welfare or living conditions. These factors have generated resentment towards the government. The richest place among these districts was Sogdian; however, in recent years it has also been overcome by poverty. These conditions have been favorable to the Islamists, enabling them to mobilize recruits from among unemployed people by using framing processes. The Adolat tried to assist people by bringing up Islamic rule. Later, its members started using violent acts against not only government, but also the civilian population. For example, objects of the militants' attack became the popular Islam incorporated with non-Islamic customs. Pre-Islamic rituals such as fire worship (a characteristic of Zoroastrianism, which was prevalent in the region), a dance of women near fire, and the Nouruz holiday have been practiced among the population for a long time.<sup>131</sup> Traditional Islam has been the primary form in Central Asian since Islam was introduced.

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<sup>129</sup> Efgeniy Abdullaev, "Islam and Religious Factors in Modern Uzbekistan," last modified July 16, 2011, <http://www.islamsng.com/uzb/dialogue/2101>.

<sup>130</sup> Saodat Alimova and Muzaphar Alimov, *The Influence of Anti-Terrorism Campaign in Afghanistan for Neighboring Central Asian Countries* (Sweden: CA & CC Press, 1998).

<sup>131</sup> Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle*.

The absence of solidarity and a strong indigenous network had a negative impact on mobilizing the masses. The number of supportive population declined.<sup>132</sup> After several violent acts, the regime started repression, and many ordinary Muslims were abused. For example, in February 1999 the IMU members conducted several terrorist acts in Tashkent using explosive devices that killed 20 people.<sup>133</sup> Indeed, Islamists underestimated Karimov, who gained strong support within the government and among some people, because he started to fight against terrorism. After unsuccessful attempts to mobilize members of the Adolat Party, they joined to continue activities in Tajik civil war. However, the Tajik government chose rational decision to compromise with Islamists.<sup>134</sup>

After September 11, the IMU fled to Afghanistan and fought alongside the Taliban. In the same year, the IMU escaped to Pakistan together with Al-Qaida members.<sup>135</sup> The IMU started to send radicalized members to neighboring Central Asian countries to indoctrinate and recruit more people through Islamic institutions. The second tactic that the IMU has used is indoctrination through female members. There are many legal and illegal migrants working in Kazakhstan, especially in Almaty, the former capital city. People who have come there rent apartments in groups of two and more people to make it easier to pay for housing. According to what female migrant workers living in Almaty said, unknown women came to their apartments and insisted they join the IMU.<sup>136</sup> Those women were well trained in terms of convincing people, and they seem to be better than men in recruiting, because they encourage more confidence. Thus, it seems that legitimate institutions and women are keys to mobilizing and recruiting efforts.

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<sup>132</sup> Alimova and Alimov, *The Influence of Anti-Terrorism Campaign in Afghanistan for Neighboring Central Asian Countries*.

<sup>133</sup> Aset Askarov, "The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan." History of Transformation, last modified March 10, 2009, <http://www.ia-centr.ru/expert/4063/>.

<sup>134</sup> Naumkin, "Evolution of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," <http://islamica.ru/?uid=98>.

<sup>135</sup> Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle*.

<sup>136</sup> Shakar Sadi, "The IMU Recruits Migrants," Central Asia Online, last modified August 4, 2011, <http://centralasiaonline.com/ru/articles/caii/features/main/2011/08/04/feature-01>.

## E. CULTURAL FRAMING

In this section, framing processes were characterized by using diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames that help to shape the Islamic movement of Uzbekistan members' ideology. The framing processes are vital to the mobilization process. In order to popularize ideology, the IMU frames messages in order to connect with a target audience. The predecessor of the IMU, the Adolat, used such framing processes as well. Yuldashev was an excellent orator, as people described him. He knew that religion was important for most of the Uzbek population, and through religion he could turn people against the government. In order to do that, he had to form the right ideology. He was an important figure, who had connections with his audience and like-minded people.

The IMU accused the Karimov regime of despotism and oppression calling them infidels. One of the leaders of the IMU, Tahir Yuldashev, explained:

The goals of IMU activities are firstly fighting against oppression within our country, against bribery, against the inequities and also the freeing of our Muslim brothers from prison.... Who will avenge those Muslims who have died in the prisons of the regime? Of course, we will. We consider it our obligation to avenge them ... We do not repent our declaration of jihad against the Uzbek government.<sup>137</sup>

In his next message Yuldashev argued that the IMU was not involved in terrorist acts in Tashkent, and blamed the repressive regime and unfairness towards ordinary people:

The IMU holds the ruling despotic regime fully responsible for the expositions that took place in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, as these explosions are a logical outcome of the manifestly brutal and violent policy of Uzbek government towards its own people. The people, having no way to communicate with the government in peaceful language, had been forced to use a language that government could understand. The IMU believes that events that have fallen completely at the feet of the whole Uzbek people and especially the tyrannized youth are the manifestation of the deep-seated inner perceptions and therefore went completely out of control. It is also to be recalled that, aside from this, life inside the country

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<sup>137</sup> Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 4 (August 1986): 464–481, [www.jstor.org/stable/2095581](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2095581).

is in absolute decline, while the despotic government in the prosecution of its policy finds itself in complete subservience to the dark force of the world. In this connection the IMU declares that there is no link whatsoever between the explosions in Tashkent and the Movement does not exclude objective reasons for what happened and makes the totalitarian regime responsible for the explosions, and draws attention to its fruitless activity in domestic and foreign policy.<sup>138</sup>

The concept of Ghuraba was a one of the frames. Ghuraba (translated from the Arabic “Ghirab”) means “alien,” “foreigner.” This terminology first was proposed by one of the Islamists in Uzbekistan, who followed Wahhabism of Abduvali-Kori. His audiotapes were distributed as lessons of Islam to people. Later, Ghuraba was interpreted as “rogues.” Abduvali-Kori’s speeches were directed against secular Muslims who did not want to follow sharia law and followed their local traditions and customs. That kind of Islam was embraced by most Central Asians.<sup>139</sup> Introducing the concept of radical ideology, Ghuraba caused division among Muslims. Using that, Adolat members created a basic ideology for the IMU, which later was broadened and assimilated with other ideologies of terrorist organizations.

The prognostic frame explains the response and solution that Muslims have to take against aggressors and infidels. For example, the next Yuldashev message regarding the February 1999 Tashkent bombings asserted:

The IMU believes that such events (unfairness and injustice) can be eradicated only in conditions of an independent Islamic regime after the overthrow of the cruel government that has fallen under the influence of outside imperial forces.<sup>140</sup>

For Yuldashev, Islam is the solution. In the leaflets of the IMU that were distributed in Tashkent, Yuldashev mentioned: “Islam grants us the freedom of personality, directs us along the rightful path, and endows us with natural rights.”<sup>141</sup> Given economic difficulties in the region, he tried to show people that Islam was a key against

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<sup>138</sup> Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle*.

<sup>139</sup> Babadjanov, “Jihad is an Ideology of Rogues,” Institution of Oriental Studies, [http://www.knyazev.org/biblio/Jihad\\_ifeac.pdf](http://www.knyazev.org/biblio/Jihad_ifeac.pdf)

<sup>140</sup> Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle*.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

evil. Adolat members caught lawbreakers and publicly punished them according to sharia law. These kinds of acts started to change people's minds about and relationship with the Adolat membership. Older people admired the Islamists' actions that seemed to be right. The Islamists sent messages through speeches in mosques and madrasahs in Fergana Valley and Namangan, such as Gumbaz, Ata Wali Khan Tura, Saodat and Digrizlik.<sup>142</sup> These speeches have promoted the ideas that only Islam can save people from corruption and infidels, who are pro-communist people, and improve socio-economic conditions. For example, the Islamists caught a lawyer of the district and beat him making him apologize in front of people for "injustice" he had done.<sup>143</sup> According to the first announcement of Adolat members, an Islamic state under sharia law must be created in order for people to attain a good life. Among the activities related to this goal, Yuldashev insisted people pray regularly, and women cover themselves with *parandja* (veils that cover from head to toes), forbidding them from wearing untraditional clothes.

During the war in Chechnya, Yuldashev sent his next message of the IMU's jihad to all Uzbekistani brethren, émigrés, and fighters for the faith in Chechnya:

The argument ascribed to the IMU, that "jihad must be postponed" is absolutely deniable. We understand perfectly well that it is impossible to defeat the infidels without arms. However, the launching of such a large-scale undertaking without a corresponding political, economic, and military preparation will inevitably cause unfounded losses. The infidel regime understands this quite well, too. Therefore, it is trying to create a political situation that could draw the Muslim into a premature struggle. The IMU is starting the armed struggle without hesitation. However, only its supreme leadership will determine the date and place.

Brother mujahedeen let us draw conclusions from the events that passed. Let us not repeat our mistakes and let Allah give us the power to elevate the world of Allah, not only in Uzbekistan but also the world over; let Him strengthen our determination to build our Islamic Caliphate anew. Amin.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Sergey Dolmov, "Islam against Islam," last modified December 24, 2012, <http://expert.ru/expert/2013/01/islam-protiv-islama/>.

<sup>143</sup> Babadjanov, "Jihad Is an Ideology of Rogues," n.d., [http://www.knyazev.org/biblio/Jihad\\_ifeac.pdf](http://www.knyazev.org/biblio/Jihad_ifeac.pdf).

<sup>144</sup> Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia*.



The motivational frame is a component of framing processes and goes along with other diagnostic and prognostic frames. The Iranian revolution shows the importance of the motivational framing. Only disaffection with the regime was not sufficient to inspire people to risk their lives. A strong promise was important to overcome any fear that had ordinarily prevented people from joining the movement.”<sup>145</sup> In this case, the motivational frame was also advocated by the IMU leader Yuldashev. Struggle against regime is portrayed as “the equivalent of holy war” and the concept of “martyrdom” has been used broadly, especially in the oath of the IMU.<sup>146</sup>

A certificate of an oath performed during the passage of the IMU onto the path of jihad, in which the host of Allah demonstrates its physical and spiritual readiness to pick up the broken banner of Islam, as well as acknowledgment of the responsibility to liberate Muslim men and women from under the yoke:

I, mujahed \_\_\_\_\_, have acquainted myself with the IMU statue and support it.

In this struggle the IMU is in the forefront; as an active participant in the movement I undertake to obey the orders of Allah, his Prophet, IMU Commander-in-Chief Muhammad Tahir, and the commanders appointed by him without question.

I swear, calling Allah and you to witness, to endure in the cause of jihad all the hardships, to fight to the last drop of blood; for the sake of reaching the lofty goal I am also prepared to become a *Shahid* (martyr).

This section showed that the IMU recruits have already become martyrs and proved ready to sacrifice their lives for their commander-in-chief. They are very disciplined and devoted to their leaders.

“Muslmanabad” (The Land of Islam) is the next frame. It is introduced by Rahmatulla Allama:

First, Central Asia belongs to Muslim world, which is a homogeneous unified Muslim territory where Islam dominates everywhere; second,

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<sup>145</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*.

<sup>146</sup> Snow et al., “Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation.”

Shari'a governs relations between individuals; third, all the people in this space believe in Allah and their society is ruled by the educated 'ulama.<sup>147</sup>

Failure to achieve their goals in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, the Adolat members moved to Pakistan. Al-Qaida and the Taliban have become close allies against the West. Their leaders are ideologists. For example, Akbotaev Sherali worked in Kyrgyzstan and was an ideologist. He was one of the closest friends of Juma Namangani. The IMU member Usam Gazi was an ideologist also, before he became a leader. He could speak many languages, such as Arabic, Persian, Uzbek, and English and Russian depending on his audience, and was also educated in computer technology. He gave speeches during Islamic holidays, such as *Orozo-Ayt* and *Kuran Ait*, and called the public to jihad against NATO allies.<sup>148</sup> The IMU has media that has translated the messages into many languages. The IMU also releases a magazine in Waziristan "Kabouilde nim gep (What Is Happening in Kabul)." <sup>149</sup> IMU's jihad was originally directed against Karimov's regime. However, it has since changed. Every Muslim in Uzbekistan has to leave Uzbekistan and join his or her brothers, because the "infidel" government of Uzbekistan does not allow for Muslim to live in Uzbekistan in peace.<sup>150</sup> As previously mentioned, one of the co-founders of the IMU, Yuldashev, in his speech always talked about dying as a martyr for the jihad was a first goal for every Muslim.<sup>151</sup> Most of the young men recruited traveled to Saudi Arabia for religious instruction. They acquired Arabic language and accepted Saudi's funds to help them be "re-born" as a Muslim. Nevertheless, the created ideological structure was weak and that led to failure, because many people still embraced a traditional type of Islam (in the northern part of Uzbekistan).<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia*.

<sup>148</sup> Amin Sayd, "The IMU in Pakistan," East Time, last modified May 30, 2013, <http://easttime.ru/analytics/uzbekistan/deyatelnost-islamskogo-dvizheniya-uzbekistana-v-pakistane-chast-pervaya/3972>.

<sup>149</sup> Rabbimov Kamollidin, "Ideology for Uzbek Jihadism," Fergana News, last modified November 22, 2011, <http://www.fergananews.com/articles/7038>.

<sup>150</sup> "Closer Look at the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," Avesta.tj, last modified September 19, 2013, <http://www.avesta.tj/security/20475-pristalnyy-vzglyad-na-islamskoe-dvizhenie-uzbekistana.html>.

<sup>151</sup> "Shahiyd Muhammad Tohir 2." video, 10:09, posted by "quertyquerty," August 27, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9sTPHxhbq0>.

<sup>152</sup> Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, 2.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

Based on past activities some conclusions can be made. In the first part of this chapter we discuss and assess political opportunity for the IMU. As the Adolat Party, IMU had an opportunity to overthrow the Karimov regime. It failed to do so, however, because Karimov controlled everything in Uzbekistan, including the media and religious organizations. Thus, the Islamists could not take advantage of this first political opportunity. The civil war in Tajikistan gave them a second opportunity to take control of Tajikistan, then Uzbekistan. However, exhausted from war the Tajik government and Tajik opposition achieved a peace agreement. With no chance of another political opportunity, the IMU moved to the FATAs in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Leadership of the IMU played an important role in establishing the group, and in recruitment. Leaders tried to attract people into the group by showing its faithful acts against government injustice. Punishing people who break the sharia law gave people more confidence about the group. Especially the group gained popularity among respected elders. Using a crisis—the collapse of the Soviet Union—the Adolat Party promised people a better life. Realizing that the Uzbek government was not going to compromise, though, Adolat members started to commit terrorist acts in which many civilians were killed, especially in Tashkent's terrorist attacks in 1999. There was a propaganda war between the Karimov regime and Yuldashev over these terrorist acts, which the Karimov regime eventually won. He won because he controlled all media. Besides the Adolat members had many misunderstanding within their group and with representatives of traditional Islam, which made mobilization even harder. Mobilization for the IMU finished unsuccessfully.

Cultural framing was supported by diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framings. The IMU declared that the government is despotic and acts unjustly toward its people. IMU leadership sent many messages to local people in order to gain support. Their main framings—Islam is the solution, creation of Muslmanabad, Ghuraba, and the concept of martyrdom—supported calling for jihad. However, since the government controlled all media, it was impossible to conduct a propaganda campaign in Uzbekistan.

To conclude, first, the IMU promoted a clearly puritanical type of Islam based on Salafism. Second, it had control primarily in the Fergana area. Third, the IMU tried to show that Islamists were able to eliminate the roots of corruption, but they failed.<sup>153</sup> Fourth, Islamists attempted to show that everyone is socially equal in comparison to government leaders. Finally, the IMU called for the creation of an Islamic state based on sharia rule. The leaders wanted to seize power by force, which showed irrationality on the part of the leaders and distorted messages about pure Islam. Many of their terror attacks led to civilian casualties. In response, people started to incline towards the repressive Karimov regime, rather than the more brutal Islamists. Thus, the IMU eroded its own credibility in front of the supportive masses, and lost their support. These conditions forced the IMU to move out of the country and reorganize in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It has since joined with the Islamic State, the most powerful terrorist organization in the world, armed with modern weaponry and strong propaganda.

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<sup>153</sup> Matthew Stein, "The Goals of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Its Impact on Central Asia and the United States," Foreign Military Studies Office, <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/IMU-Goals.pdf>.

## IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. RESEARCH SUMMARY: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

This thesis examines and analyzes the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan through social movement theory and evaluates the IMU's threat to Kazakhstan. The first chapter introduces the framework and provides a brief explanation about the thesis. The second chapter starts with a literature review and traces the emergence of radical Islam in Central Asia in the context of the history of Islam in Central Asia. This chapter also discusses the concept of SMT, especially explaining the differences between themes. Next, each variable such as political opportunity, mobilizing structure, and cultural framing is discussed individually. There are many models of SMT, such as the classical model and resource mobilization, but they are not able to cover all aspects of a particular group. For example, the classical model only includes a psychological approach and distances itself from a political one. Resource mobilization theory covers mobilization processes, but the formal organizational manifestation of these processes and their physical aspects are not considered.<sup>154</sup> Finally, it becomes clear that the better model is the political process model. This model considers the perspective of both SMT models, and also considers that movements represent a long-term process, rather than many separate developmental levels.<sup>155</sup>

The IMU is represented through the SMT in order to analyze and evaluate its threat. This part starts from its formation as a group of youths, who establish a political party, and later transform it into a terrorist group. There were some conditions, such as the economic and moral deprivations of the society and political ambiguity, which provided a political opportunity to the group. Yet the Uzbek state's brutal repression of Islamists, did not give a chance for revolution, and many ordinary Muslims were persecuted under the government response. President Karimov closed any political opportunity in the country to prevent activity against the government.

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<sup>154</sup> McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*.

<sup>155</sup> McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*.

Mobilization became productive when youth merely started its movement, when “Islamists” helped locals to eradicate injustice by fighting against the government. Local support waned, however, when Islamists started using violence against the innocent population. In terms of framing process, Islamists use their oath and concepts, such as Ghuraba, Islam as the solution, martyrdom, and Holy War. However, these techniques do not work effectively in a state where the government is repressive and has no tolerance toward Islamists.

Although the IMU failed as a social movement in Uzbekistan, it succeeded after moving to Pakistan and Afghanistan. In these locations, IMU became a decentralized terrorist group. We can say it succeeds, because it still conducts terrorist acts in Pakistan and fights in cooperation with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which represents a threat to Central Asian countries.

**Research strengths:** There is much information about the period of time when the IMU existed as a political party called Adolat; Internet sites can be found in many different languages, such as Kazakh, Uzbek, English, and Russian, which give more opportunity to conduct research; research was also based on the experiences of this researcher and his friends in Uzbekistan.

**Research weaknesses:** Data analysis requires more time; there is some uncertain information which requires confirmation by conducting a survey in the researched region.

## **B. FUTURE RESEARCH**

The IMU is a well-organized and decentralized terrorist group today. Although its current membership consists of different nationalities, including Pashtuns, it still keeps its name that relates to Uzbekistan.<sup>156</sup> Regardless of it being expelled from Uzbekistan, the IMU is still active and capable of attacks, as shown by the terrorist act in Karachi airport, which took the lives of nine suicide bombers and at least 18 Pakistani citizens, including

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<sup>156</sup> Mendkovich, Nikita, “What is the IMU?” last modified October 22, 2010, <http://navoine.info/chtotakoe-idu.html>.

security forces.<sup>157</sup> Recently, the IMU members declared they support ISIS and would cooperate with ISIS in order to promote “The Islamic Caliphate.” In fact, during a U.S. attack on ISIS in September of this year, 17 IMU members were killed.<sup>158</sup> It is known that the IMU is comprised of many nationalities, and there is a concern about what would happen if those terrorists returned to their countries. Would they live as they had lived before joining IMU, or would they start a new jihad? Since the IMU continues to exist and thrive, future studies need to address ways in which to fight and terminate it.

### **C. POLICY IMPLEMENTATIONS**

This section suggests how the Kazakhstan government can address policy implementation on the assumption of empirical evidence. Recent terrorist acts have shown the Kazakh government was ready to repel any kind of terrorist threat; however, the government still lacks the capacity to respond properly to threats posed by terrorism. With respect to the government, it should profoundly understand the concept of terrorism, as well as the role of counterterrorism units and what they are designed for. They need to attain high professionalism, and modernize equipment and weapons. Modern unconventional warfare against terrorism requires modern weaponry and qualified special operators. Enhancing intelligence operations also plays a crucial role in preventing any kind of terrorist threat.

#### **1. Exchange between Different Government Agencies**

Immigration bureaus, the National Security Committee (NSC) of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and other security force elements should have effective information sharing, monitoring, and supervision of suspicious Kazakhstani people, domestically as well as overseas.

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<sup>157</sup> Murat Sadykov, “Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Claims Karachi Airport Attack,” EURASIANET.org, last modified July 11, 2014, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/68526>.

<sup>158</sup> “Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan Joins ISIS,” Vestnik Kavkaza, last modified October 6, 2014, <http://vestnikkavkaza.net/news/politics/60716.html>.

## **2. Exchange on Databases with Neighboring Countries**

Cooperation with neighboring countries is very important because of the effect of teamwork. There are many regions that reflect a terrorism threat, such the western and eastern parts of Kazakhstan, and the Xingjian Uighur Autonomous Region. Nevertheless, the southern region of the Kazakhstan is more vulnerable to terrorist threats from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Cooperation with the United States counterinsurgency institutions continues, and it must be more productive. Sharing information with neighboring countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Russia would give more advantages in disrupting extremist and terrorist groups.

## **3. No Concessions to Terrorists and Legislation**

The Kazakh government should give no concessions to terrorists. It must not pay ransom, release prisoners, or make other concessions that encourage terrorists. Terrorists who conducted fatal acts must be executed in order to warn others. Furthermore, families of terrorists must be held responsible for their family member. If a family member is detained in relation to terrorism, his or her family must pay a fine of a certain amount of money or property confiscation. This may encourage people to think twice before committing violence.

## **4. 2013–2017 Counterterrorism Program**

On October 2, 2013, the Kazakh president approved a state program to fight religious extremism and terrorism for the period of 2013 through 2017.<sup>159</sup> This program is well-organized, and in future this strategy may work very well. However, while targeting extremists and terrorist ideology, the state should distinguish between traditional Islam and radical forms, and should not target all at once. Wrong targeting of religious institutions also causes problems.

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<sup>159</sup> “Kazakhstan New Counter-Terrorism and Anti-Extremism Strategy,” last modified on September 14, 2013, [http://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc\\_id=31451218](http://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=31451218).



#### **D. FINAL ANALYSIS AND PROGNOSIS**

As we see from empirical evidence, my conclusion is that the IMU is a real threat to Kazakhstan. In the 1990s before the Soviet Union collapsed, regimes were able to control Islamists groups in some states. In some states the collapse of the Soviet Union ended up with civil war followed by the killing of innocents. This time was lessons to learn for states, and experience to gain for radical Islamists. Islamists lost their battle, but not the war. The war against terrorism still continues, and today terrorist groups become more modernized and experienced.

The IMU recently has joined with ISIS, but what does that mean? It means that the IMU has support, and the main weapon in modern warfare is strong propaganda. Without propaganda, any terrorist group would just be considered a group of bandits, of no interest to anyone.

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan still have depressed economic conditions, high unemployment, and an increasing level of religiosity. These are not the main reasons for terrorism, but some of the contributors. These factors change people's mind towards a government. These conditions are prevalent not only in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, but also to some degree in Kazakhstan. Although Kazakhstan's economic situation is better than in neighboring states, there are people who are dissatisfied with the government—and vice versa. When the number of dissatisfied people exceeds that of the satisfied, a political crisis may occur. A political crisis is often a good opportunity for radical groups to recruit, to expand, and to escalate the situation even more in order to get rid of the existing regime and establish an Islamic Caliphate. Besides, after Kazakhstan gained independence, the number of religious people started drastically growing. Salafism and Wahhabism also became active, which was confirmed by the terrorist acts that happened in 2011.

IMU members already conduct indoctrination in strong states like Russia and China (in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region). Although leaders of the Central Asian states conduct activities against terrorism, they remain skeptical about the coming

threat. Every state wants to protect itself alone, which is not going to work well. Terrorist groups are uniting, which makes them powerful, why should not we?

If needed precautions are not be taken into serious consideration and further implementation, it is obvious to me that by the middle of 2015, Central Asia could become a platform for a “Central Asian Spring,” where the IMU may play a vanguard role.

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